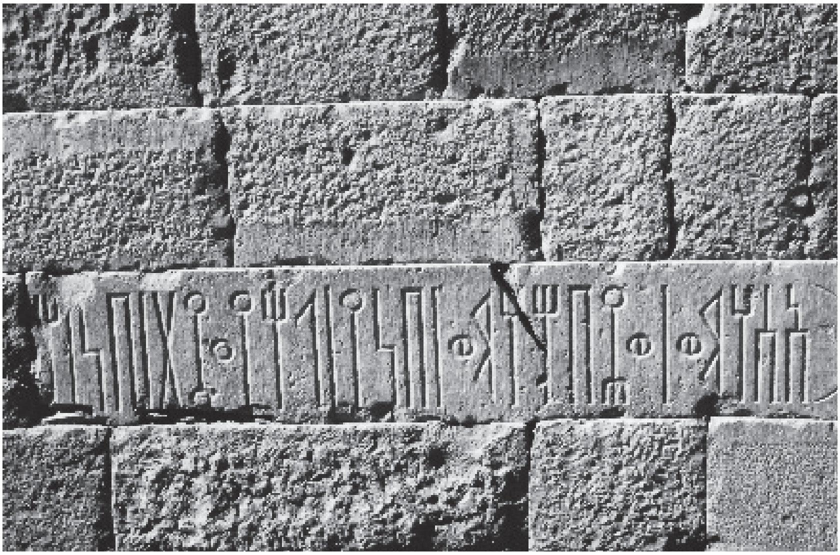
Orient & Méditerranée

nº 12

Entre Carthage et l'Arabie heureuse

Mélanges offerts à François Bron

édités par par Françoise Briquel-Chatonnet,
Catherine Fauveaud et Iwona Gajda



De Boccard

Two Qatabanian inscriptions from Ḥinū az-Zurayr

Mohammed Maraqten
Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz

The inscribed limestone blocks which are the subject of this paper were discovered by villagers at the site of Ḥinū az-Zurayr. Ḥinū az-Zurayr is the modern name of the Qatabanian city Haribat (*hrbt*), mentioned several times in Qatabanian inscriptions. Haribat was one of the important cities located on the incense trade route leading from Wādī Bayḥān north to Mārib.[1]

These two blocks are presently stored in a private house near the site. According to its owners, they were discovered during clandestine excavations in the northern part of the site. The author took photographs of these inscriptions in March 2004 with the owner's permission.[2]

A new Qatabanian house property document from Ḥinū az-Zurayr: inscription ḤZ-M 1

The inscription is engraved on a reddish sandstone block 35 cm high and 45 cm wide. It is a typical Qatabanian inscription about the ownership and building of a house. By comparing it to similar documents, the reading of this six-line text may be considered certain. This inscription might be dated to 1th century CE. The paleography has similarities with period C (end of the 1st century BCE to the beginning of the 2nd century CE) proposed by A. Avanzini.[3] The inscription now bears siglum ḤZ-M 1 (Ḥinū az-Zurayr-Maraqten 1, **fig. 1**).

1. Doe 1983: 128-129; Al-Sheiba 1987: 58; Breton 1994: 54-55, 120-122, 214-221; Schiettecatte 2011: 139-143.
2. During our excavation of the American Foundation for the Study of Man at the Awām temple (Maḥram Bilqīs), we had the opportunity to visit archaeological sites near Mārib.
3. 2004: 30f.

Entre Carthage et l'Arabie heureuse. Mélanges offerts à François Bron, éd. Fr. Briquel-Chatonnet, C. Fauveaud et I. Gajda (Orient & Méditerranée), Paris, 2013 — p. 73-82.

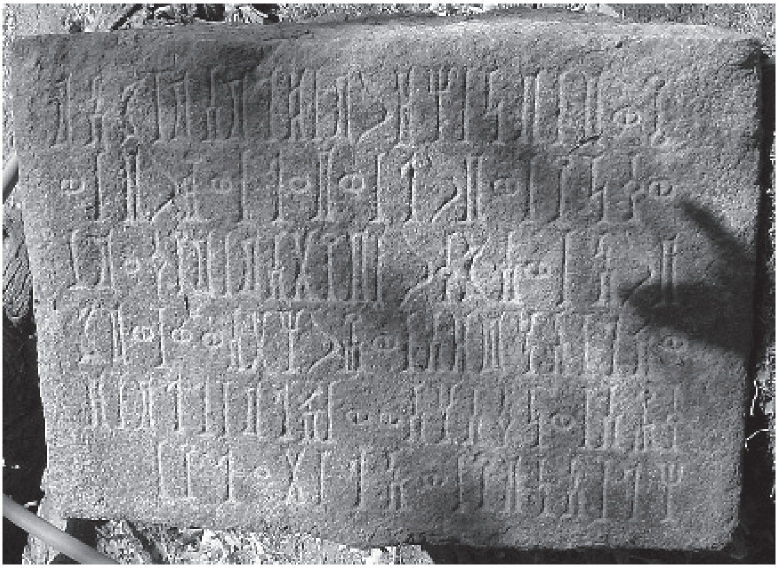


Fig. 1 – *Ḥ Z-M 1 (phot. M. Maraqten).*

Text

1. *t̠wb / bn / ḥḍrm / d̠lms^{1}m / s^{2}ʾm*
2. *wqny / wbrl / wbʿl / wẓrb / w*
3. *brʾ / ws^{1}s^{2}qr / byts^{1}m / myfʿm /*
4. *wkl / ʾḫṭbs^1 / wṣrḥts^{1}ww / wms^2*
5. *qṣs^1 / wnfs^{1}hs^{1}ww / klm / glm / b*
6. *ḥg / ʾnby / wʾl / tʿly /*

Translation

1. T̠awāb, son of Ḥāḍirum of the family Lamasum, has purchased,
2. acquired, held, owned, took legal possession of, and
3. constructed as well as completed his house Mayfaʿum
4. and all its lower rooms and its upper rooms, its windows
5. and its room terraces, together with full ownership rights according to
6. the order of Anbay, and no violation thereof is allowed.

Philological Commentary

The inscription has three aspects. The first gives the name of the owner and his affiliations. The second is a legal formula fixing ownership. The inscription is a public declaration of the acquisition of property, mentioning the name of the house and its parts. The third aspect confirms full ownership rights to the house. Several Qatabanian inscriptions document rights of ownership, and all are similar in style, with some variations, to this one (for instance RES 3962 = CSAI I 56).

Line 1

The first line mentions the name of the author, *ṯwb*, and of his father, *ḥḍrm* (Ḥāḍirum), and his family name *ḏ-lms*^{1}*m* (Ḏū-Lamasum). The name *ṯwb*, Ṯawāb, is well attested in the South Arabian onomasticon and it occurs in the Qatabanian inscriptions. It seems to be a short form of *ṯwbʾl*, a name attested repeatedly in the South Arabian onomasticon, in particular in Qatabanic (Hayajneh 1998: 110). Etymologically, the name *ṯwb* derives from the root *ṯwb* "reward" commonly meaning "to return, come back". It can be translated as "reward of (the god x)". The name of the father *ḥḍrm*, Ḥāḍirum "present, attending" also occurs in Qatabanian inscriptions (Hayajneh 1998: 120). However, *ḥḍrm* might also be considered a family name. Such family names occur frequently in Qatabanian inscriptions (e.g. RES 3566/27 = CSAI I 208/27). The clan name *ḏ-lms*^{1}*m* occurs for the first time. However the name of tribe and village called Lamas is known in the area of Al-Qārra in the district of Ruṣud in the governate of Abyan (Al-Maqḥafī 2002 II: 1378); as is the woman's name *lms*^{1}*m* (cf. Sholan 1999: 69, 131; ʿAbdullah *et al.* 1997: 206). The verb *s*^{2}*ʾm* in Qatabanic (Ricks 1989: 164) and in Sabaic means "to purchase, buy" (*SD*: 130).

Lines 2-3

The root *qny*, well attested in South Arabian inscriptions means "to acquire" (Ricks 1989: 147, *SD*: 106), while the term *brl* seems to appear here for the first time in Qatabanic. It occurs in Sabaic with the meaning "to acquire, give possession to, acquire possession of" (*SD*: 31), *brl* could be read also as *brl* with the same meaning (cf. Stein 2010: 203ff). The verb *bʿl,* meaning "to own, possess, acquire" is found in other Qatabanian inscriptions (e.g. CSAI I 129/5), and is also well attested in Sabaic. It means "to own, possess, acquire, transfer, and to hand over property" (*SD*: 25). The noun *bʿl* (plural *ʾbʿl*) is attested with the meaning "owner" in Qatabanian inscriptions (Ricks 1989: 31). The root *brʾ* means "to form, fashion, build, construct" (Ricks 1989: 32f; *SD*: 30). The verbal stem *s*^{1}*s*^{2}*qr* is the causative of the root *s*^{2}*qr* "complete, finish" (Ricks 1989: 171; cf. *SD*: 133). *byt-s*^{1}*m* "their house" bears the name *myfʿm*, which means "the exalted one". This name derives from the root *yfʿ* "to be high, go up to"; (cf. *myfʿ* as a toponym in Qatabanian inscriptions, Al-Sheiba 1987: 55f). *Myfʿm* occurs as a personal epithet several times in South Arabian onomastics, in particular in Qatabanic (Hayajneh 1998: 243).

Lines 4-5

The owner of the house states that he carried out some building works. The term *ʾḫṭb-s*^{1} is the plural of *ḫṭb*, and the *–s*^{1} is the suffix of the third person singular possessive form "his", namely the house. It has been interpreted as "a lower story" in Qatabanic (Ricks 1989: 72) and in Sabaic (*SD*: 62), and Minaic as "le corps de bâtiments" (Arbach 1993: 44).[4]

4. Cf. Agostini 2005: 278f.

The term *ṣrḥt* is the plural of *ṣrḥ* “upper chamber, upper story” (Ricks 1989: 137)[5] and –*s¹ww* is the suffix of the third person singular (Beeston 1984: 65). The word *ms²qṣ-s¹* (probably a plural) has been interpreted as “room, section, part”. This term has been attested only once, in a Qatabanian inscription (CSAI I 56/5 = RES 3962/5). A. Agostini (2005: 317) translates *s²qṣ* as “piccola stanza”. The term *šaqūṣ*, *šāqūṣ* (plural *šawāqīṣ*) means “small window” in modern Yemeni dialects.[6] M. Piamenta (1990/I: 262) suggests that *šaqūṣ* might mean “...tiny window with or without glass set in plaster, or a small wooden door set in large window shutters”, while P. Behnstedt (1996: 662f) proposes “Lüftungsöffnung über einem Fenster”. However, the meaning of *ms²qṣ* in this text could be “windows”. This translation seems to fit the context better than simply “room”.

The term *nfs¹-h* (plural of *nfs¹*) has been translated as “roof terrace” by S. Ricks (1989: 109) and as “inner room” by A. Avanzini (CSAI I 45/3). There are good parallels from Qatabanian inscriptions for this passage: for example, *s²ʾm / w-ʿrb / byt-s¹ / yfs² / wkl / ʾḫtb-s¹ / w-ṣrḥt-s¹ww / w-nfs¹h-s¹ww / w-ms¹qfts¹* “purchased, took legal possession of his house Yafaš and all its lower and its upper rooms and roof terraces and its roofed hall” (Ja 118/2-3 = CSAI I 45/2-3).[7]

Lines 5- 6

The last part of the inscription, containing a mention of the ownership rights, consists of two phrases *klm / glm* and *bḥg / ʾnby*. The word *klm*, root *kll*, means “everything, altogether” (Ricks 1989: 85). The term *glm* which derives from the root *gwl*, has been attested several times in Qatabanian inscriptions and translated as “entirety” (Ricks 1989: 37; e.g. CSAI I 45/3). It has its equivalent in Sabaic *glm*, *gwlm* “with full ownership” (SD, 51). The phrase *klm / glm* means “altogether with full ownership rights”, see for example *kls¹m / glm* (RES 3962/4-5, CSAI I 45/3; cf. Ricks 1989: 37). The invocation of deities in this case mentions only one god, Anbay. The phrase *b-ḥg / ʾnby* means “by the order of [the god] Anbay”. It has been attested many times in Qatabanian inscriptions, e.g. CSAI I 7/3-4. The phrase *b-ḥg / ʾnby / wʾl / tʿly* is known from other Qatabanian inscriptions (i.e., VL 10/3-4).[8] This formula declares that the works of the house have been carried out according to the wishes of the god Anbay. *ʾl / tʿly*: This phrase means “no claims are allowed” or “nobody is allowed to violate” the property or house. It is an expression of legitimization and pronouncement of ownership of the house by Ṯawāb, son of Ḥāḍirum, of the family Lamasum.

5. See also Sabaic *ṣrḥt* “upper part, courtyard” (*SD*: 145); cf. Yemeni Arabic *ṣarḥ* with the meaning of “tower, palace” (Al-Selwi 1987: 130f).

6. Al-Iryānī 1996: 508f.

7. Cf. Jamme 1958: 183-198, also Agostini 2005: 58.

8. Cf. Al-Ghul 1959: 423-425 and CSAI I 73.

Offering of a statute by the priests of Ḥarīb Ḏū-Waʿrum to ʿAmm Ḏū-Raymatum and Ḏāt Raḥbān : inscription ḤZ-M 2

Inscribed limestone base of statue with 8 lines of text, broken at the top, the last line is missing. The stone is cracked in three pieces and the borders are slightly damaged (**fig. 2**).

The three authors of the inscription are probably clients of a clan called Banū Nağrān. They describe themselves as *rbyw / ḥrb / ḏ-wʿrm* "priests of Ḥarīb Ḏū-Waʿrum". Two of the authors made the offering of a bronze statue to ʿAmm Ḏū-Raymat and Ḏāt Raḥbān. A long invocation to the Qatabanian deities is followed by a mention of the Qatabanian king Yadaʿʾab Ġaylān, son of Fariʿkarib (dated to the end of the 2nd century BCE) known also as *mukarrib* of Qataban (MQ-Hajar Kuhlan 11).[9] The period of the 2nd to early 1st century BCE is called period B2 by A. Avanzini (2004: 29f).



Fig. 2 – *ḤZ-M 2 (phot. M. Maraqten).*

Text

1. *hwfʿm / wys^{2}rḥʿm / wʾlʿm / bnw / hwfʿ[l?. / ʾdm?]*
2. *bn / ngrn / rbyw / ḥrb / ḏwʿrm / hwfʿm / wys^{2}rḥʿ*
3. *m / s^{1}qnyw / ʿm / ḏrymtm / wḏt / rḥbn / ṣlm / ḏhbn / b*
4. *ḏtm / tkrbs^{1}my / rṯdw / ʿm / wḏt / rḥbn / ʾʾḏns^{1}m*
5. *wʾwlds^{1}m / wkl / ʾqnys^{1}m / bʿṯtr / wb / ʿm / wb / ʾn*
6. *by / wb / ʿm / ḏs^{2}qr / wb / ḥwkm / nbṭ / wb / ḏt / ṣntm*
7. *wb / ḏt / ẓhrn / wb / ḏt / rḥbn / wb / ḏt / ḥmym / wb / mrʾ*
8. *s^{1}m / ydʿʾbġyln / bn / frʿkrb / mlk / qtbn / wb /*
9. *[...]*

9. Cf. Arbach 2005-2006: 123.

Translation

1. Hawfāʿm and Yašraḥʿamm and ʾĪlʿamm of the sons Hawfāʾīl [clients?]
2. of the clan Nagrān, priests of Ḥarīb of Waʿrum. Hawfāʿmm and Yašraḥʿamm
3. have dedicated a bronze statue to ʿAmm Ḏū-Raymatum and Ḏāt Raḥbān
4. as they promised them. They have put under the protection of ʿAmm and Ḏāt Raḥbān their faculties,
5. their children and all their offerings. By (the authority of) ʿAṯtar, ʿAmm,
6. Anbay, ʿAmm Ḏū-Šaqr and Ḥawkam Nabaṭ, Ḏāt Ṣannatum,
7. Ḏāt Ẓahrān, Ḏāt Raḥbān and Ḏāt Ḥamīm. And by their
8. lord Yadaʿʾab Ġaylān, son of Fariʿkarib, the king of Qatabān, and by
9. [...]

Comments

Although the upper part of the inscription is damaged, in particular the beginning and end of the first line, the first name can definitely be read as *hwfʿm* since it occurs in the second line. The family name at the end of the first line, in spite of the damaged upper part of the letters, is probably *hwfʾl*. At the end of the first line, the space for one letter might be the particle / *w* /. The personal names *hwfʿm*, Hawfāʿamm and *ʾlʿm*, ʾĪlʿamm are well attested in Qatabanian inscriptions (Hayajneh 1998: 262, 80). The family name *hwfʾl*, Hawfāʾīl, occurs several times in Qatabanian inscriptions and is well attested as a personal name in Qatabanian and other South Arabian inscriptions (Hayajneh 1998: 262).

The phrase *ḥrb / ḏ-wʿrm* has hitherto been unattested. The personal name *ḥrbm* occurs in Qatabanian inscriptions (Hayajneh 1998: 262) and in Sabaean (Ja 642/5) and Minaean sources too (Al-Said 1995: 86). *Ḥrb* is also attested in Qatabanian inscription as the name of a town (CSAI I 21/4 = RES 3550/4), apparently the city Ḥarīb in Wādī Ḥarīb. Further, *ḥrb* is attested as the name of Wādī, *s¹rn / ḥrb* "Wādī Ḥarīb", which is Ḥarīb Nihm (Ja 649/25),[10] and a name of a building (CSAI I 176 = MuB 514). *Ḥrb*, Ḥarīb, is also attested as the name of a palace, *bytn ḥrb* in fragmentary contexts (CSAI I 192/2,3 = TT1 C)[11] and in other inscriptions from Hajar bin Ḥumayd (CSAI I 62 = H 2c; CSAI I 157 = CIAS 95.11/o 2). The palace *ḥrb* is, however, not accurately identified yet (Schiettecatte 2011: 145f., 150; Schiettecatte 2006: 422). Apparently, two palaces with the name *ḥrb* existed in Qataban, one in Timnaʿ and the other in Ḏū-Ġayl (Hajar bin Ḥumayd). It has been suggested that Ḥarīb might be identified with TT1 (temple Timnaʿ 1) which could be both a palace and a temple (De Maigret & Robin 2006: 18). Of significance is the occurrence of the royal palace *ḥrb* on Qatabanian coins (ʿAbdullah *et al.* 1997: 218, 229; Huth 2010: 122-126). The particle / *ḏ* / + name occurs frequently as a designation for place-names in South Arabian inscriptions (Al-Sheiba 1987: 28f) as well as for family names. The name *wʿrm* should be considered as a place-name: cf. the noun *wʿr* "inégal (lieu, chemin)" (Arbach 1993: 100) and the personal name *wʿr* in Minaic (Al-Said 1995: 177). The term *rby* is well attested in Qatabanian inscriptions with the meaning "priest": *rby ʿm* "priest of ʿAmm" (Ricks 1989); also the plural form *rbyw ʾṯrt*

10. Cf. Al-Sheiba 1987: 23; cf. also Robin & Brunner 1997.
11. Jamme 1979: 32-39.

"the priests of Aṯirat" (CSAI I 117 = Ja 852). However, if *ḥrb* in our text is the name of a temple or palace, *rby* should be understood as "administrator" or "high-ranking official". In this inscription however, the phrase *rbyw ḥrb ḏ-wʿrm* suggests that *ḥrb* might be a deity, who is attested here for the first time. *Wʿrm* should be considered as a temple's name.

The Qatabanian king *ydʿʾb ġyln bn frʿkrb* is known from several inscriptions (Ja 118 = CSAI I 34, CSAI I 38 = MQ-Hajar Kuhlan 11; cf. also CSAI I 115 = Arbach-Sayʾūn 1). For the sequence of the invoked Qatabanian deities in our text, cf. CSAI I 23 = RES 3553 and CSAI I 11 = Ja 2366 etc.

Inscription *sigla*

For the *sigla* of the inscriptions see Avanzini 2004 and Kitchen 2000.

Bibliography

ʿAbdullah (Y.M.), Ghāleb (A.) & Sedov (A.V.)

1997 "Early Qatabānian coinage: The aṣ-Ṣurayrah coin hoard", *Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy*, 8, 203-229.

Agostini (A.)

2005 *Le iscrizioni di costruzione sudarabiche. Lessico, archeologia, società* (Dissertation, Dottorato di Linguistica), Università degli Studi di Firenze.

Arbach (M.)

1993 *Le madhābien. Lexique, onomastique et grammaire d'une langue de l'Arabie méridionale préislamique* (Thèse de doctorat), Aix en Provence.

2005-2006 "Tamnaʿ : histoire et chronologie d'après les inscriptions", *Arabia*, 3, 115-134.

Avanzini (A.)

2004 *Corpus of South Arabian Inscriptions I-III. Qatabanic, Marginal Qatabanic, Awsanite Inscriptions* (Arabia Antica, 2), Pisa.

Beeston (A.F.L.)

1984 *Sabaic Grammar* (Journal of Semitic Studies. Monograph, 6), Manchester.

Behnstedt (P.)

1996 *Die nordjemenitischen Dialekte. Teil 2: Glossar: Ḏāl-Ġayn* (Jemen-Studien, 3), Wiesbaden.

Breton (J.-F.)

1994 *Les fortifications d'Arabie Méridionale du 7^e^ au 1^er^ siècle avant notre ère* (Archäologische Berichte aus dem Yemen, VIII), Mainz am Rhein.

Doe (B.)
1983 *Monuments of South Arabia,* Naples / Cambridge.

Al-Ghul (M.)
1959 "New Qatabani inscriptions II", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, 22, 419-438.

Hayajneh (H.)
1998 *Die Personennamen in den qatabānischen Inschriften: Lexikalische und grammatische Analyse im Kontext der semitischen Anthroponomastik* (Texte und Studien zur Orientalistik, 10), Hildesheim.

Huth (M.)
2011 *Coinage of the Caravan Kingdoms: Ancient Arabian Coins from the Collection of Martin Huth* (Ancient Coins in North American Collections, 10), New York.

Al-Iryānī (M.)
1996 *Al-muʿǧam al-yamanī fī al-luġa wa-al-turāṯ: ḥawl mufradāt ḫāṣṣa min al-lahajāt al-yamaniyya*, Damascus.

Jamme (A.)
1958 "Inscriptions related to the House Yafash in Timnaʿ", in R. Le Baron Bowen & F.P. Albright (eds), *Archaeological Discoveries in South Arabia* (Publications of the American Foundation for the Study of Man, 2), Baltimore, 183-198.

1979 *Miscellanées d'ancient arabe* IX, Washington.

Kitchen (K.A.)
2000 *Documentation for Ancient Arabia. Part II, Bibliographical Catalogue of Texts* (The World of Ancient Arabia Series), Liverpool.

De Maigret (A.) & Robin (C. J.)
2006 *Tamnaʿ, antica capitale di Qatabān — Tamnaʿ, capitale antique de Qatabān — Tamnaʿ, al-ʿāṣima al-qadīma li-Qatabān* (YICAR Papers, 3), Ṣanʿāʾ.

Al-Maqḥafī (I.A.)
2002 *Muʿǧam al-buldān wa-al-qabāʾil al-yamaniyya*, 2 vol., Ṣanʿāʾ / Beirūt.

Piamenta (M.)
1990-1991 *Dictionary of post-classical Yemeni Arabic*, 2 vol., Leiden.

Ricks (S.D.)
1989 *Lexicon of Inscriptional Qatabanian* (Studia Pohl, 14), Roma.

Robin (C. J.) & Brunner (U.)
1997 *Map of Ancient Yemen - Carte du Yémen antique 1:1 000 000*, München.

Al-Said (S.)
1995 *Die Personennamen in den minäischen Inschriften: Eine etymologische und lexikalische Studie im Bereich der semitischen Sprachen* (Veröffentlichungen der Orientalischen Kommission der Akademie der Wissenschaften und Literatur Mainz, 41), Wiesbaden.

Al-Sheiba (A.)
1987 "Die Ortsnamen in den altsüdarabischen Inschriften", in *Archäologische Berichte aus dem Yemen*, IV, Mainz am Rhein, 1-62.

Al-Selwi (I.)
1987 *Jemenitische Wörter in den Werken von Al-Hamdānī und Našwān und Ihre Parallelen in den semitischen Sprachen* (Marburger Studien zur Afrika- und Asienkunde, Serie B, 10), Berlin.

Schiettecatte (J.)
2006 *Villes et urbanisation de l'Arabie du Sud à l'époque préislamique. Formation, fonctions et territorialités urbaines dans la dynamique de peuplement régionale* (Thèse de doctorat), Université Panthéon-Sorbonne, Paris.
2011 *D'Aden à Zafar : villes d'Arabie du sud préislamique* (Orient & Méditerranée, Archéologie, 6), Paris.

Sholan (A.)
1999 *Frauennamen in den altsüdarabischen Inschriften* (Texte und Studien zur Orientalistik, 11), Hildesheim.

Stein (P.)
2010 *Die altsüdarabischen Minuskelinschriften auf Holzstäbchen aus der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek in München* (Epigraphische Forschungen auf der Arabischen Halbinsel, 5), Tübingen.